



FACT SHEET #4:

Standards for Particulate Air Pollution

Federal air quality standards for particulate air pollution have been established to protect public health. There are two federal standards; one for PM-10 (particles smaller than 10 microns) and one for PM-2.5 (particles smaller than 2.5 microns). Neither of these tiny particles would be visible to the naked eye; a PM-10 particle is about one-seventh the diameter of a human hair. Most of the PM-10 particles are produced by rocks and soils. The soil particles in PM-10 are usually silt and clay. PM-2.5 particles are usually emitted by combustion sources and are formed from gases.

Ten areas in Arizona have violated the federal air quality standards for particulate air pollution (PM-10). These are called PM-10 nonattainment or maintenance areas. No area in Arizona has exceeded the federal standards for the smaller particles (PM-2.5).

The Phoenix metropolitan area is the only **serious** nonattainment area for PM-10 in the state. Other PM-10 nonattainment or maintenance areas in Arizona include Ajo, Bullhead City, Douglas, Miami-Hayden, Nogales, Paul Spur, Payson, Rillito, and Yuma.